

Report of the General Faculty meeting

September 23, 2020

1. Updates (brief overview on each by Brossmann)

A. Process of seeking new homes for Drs. Guest and Liu

- 4 departments (History, Modern and Classical Languages, English, TRS) are working with the CAS Dean to find a good fit for Gerry and Bo. The provost sanctions the efforts but will not be actively engaged. He said to the academic affairs committee that finding a home is doable but cautioned about financial implications.
- Biology is sending minimalist faculty evaluation in protest.

B. CAP (Zeki Saritoprak) is currently reviewing 5-6 proposals:

- Italian major / minor
- Leadership and social innovation major (Donnelly School of Leadership and Social Innovation)
- Digital Marketing Grad Proposal (Certificates – COMM & Boler)
- University Curriculum Committee Proposal from the Spring,
- Major Declaration and Internal Transfer Policy (UCEP)
- Graduate Academic Good Standing & Probation – Revisions (UCEP)

C. University committee on the Student Learning Experience (UCSLE) will start meeting again. Amy Wainwright is the CAS representative. Need a representative from Boler. Boler people can decide if they want it to be a one-year or three-year position.

D. University Tenure Committee (Jeff Dyck, Rank, Tenure & Promotion)

- Proposal from last year still being reviewed.

E. Faculty Council Constitution

- Revision went through one round of revision last year and is currently sitting in the handbook committee. Events in this summer and fall may impact how it will be reviewed. Brent is meeting with the committee who first put those revisions through (Kris Ehrhardt, Emily Butler) this Friday to see if further revisions are warranted, and will inform the faculty handbook committee.

F. Faculty Handbook

- Faculty handbook committee and the faculty council executive committee met with four members of the board on 9/18 about the handbook amendments.
- The committee proposed a faculty relocation amendment.
- Family Leave Information (Spring 2020)

- Modified Travel Policy (Spring 2020)

2. Board Updates

A.

- The board has agreed to slow down efforts to achieve a balanced budget, moving to a 2023 target. They also agreed that the Covid deficit and the structural gap are different issues, and should be treated differently.
- To offset the Covid deficit, the Board is contributing an extra \$3 million to the operating budget this year, is authorizing a \$3 million draw on the unrestricted portion of the endowment, and reduced the unrestricted net liquidity by about \$10 million.
- Faculty fringe benefit cut proposal has been pulled. (Benefit reduction for staff already happened.)
- The board has indicated a desire to return the money from faculty salary reduction in the future.

B. Board's vision of financial position:

- Current enrollment 2750, expected to drop to 2,700. Next year's incoming class is expected to cap at 675. The board anticipates a study body of 2,500 for a couple of years, and anticipates an annual shortfall of \$17-20 million (with a budget cost of \$90 million and a revenue of \$73 million). Aims to increase marketing investment and reduce tuition discount (which exceeds 70% this year, and our peer schools have tuition discounts of about 50%).

C. From the Academic Affairs, 3 measures of faculty productivity, none all-encompassing. Brent was asked by the board what the faculty thinks of these measures, and replied that the faculty has no knowledge of them.

- 1) Instructional capacity gap: compare the # of sections each department should teach (# of full-time faculty times 3) and the # they actually teach. Last year we taught 25 fewer courses than we should have based on the metrics (15 of them are in two programs heavily regulated by accreditation requirements). Aim to achieve balance at the department level.
- 2) Student credit hour per full-time faculty: If a faculty member teaches 3 classes per semester, at three credits each, with 20 students per class, and does that each semester, the faculty member teaches 360 credit hours a year (3x3x20x2). Take the 2700 students we expect and divide that by that 360, and we come out with 167 faculty. If we are down to 2500 students in a few years, the numbers would be reduced again.
- 3) Unfunded course releases: Steve made an adamant defense for the research-related course release. But departments may be combined to reduce administrative course release.

Faculty raised the question of why the university needed to hire outside consultants to come up with these metrics, given that some faculty members have worked hard to come up with similar metrics.

Faculty question: Why were the board amendments to the faculty Handbook not discussed at the Academic Affairs Committee?

Brent's answer: The board doesn't seem to understand that their amendments were seen by the faculty as an attack on tenure. They are far more interested in the financial issues than in tenure. So the academic affairs meeting was primarily about productivity.

D. Combined Updates from Board Reps (McAndrew, Waner, Swearingen, Canda, Barnes, Brossmann)

- Mission and diversity committee is working on a variety of programs related to title IX, center for diversity and inclusion, SAS, and others. Colin Swearingen can provide more information.
- Properties, Facilities, and Technology updates: the shopping center and apartments, after changing management, is producing profits; classroom technology updates, although not used this fall, will be useful in the future.
- Student affairs is transferred to the Provost's office. New hires will be made with retirements, but will be made in a less costly structure. The division will be reorganized under Steve.
- Covid-19 dashboard is up. As of 9/21, we have 102 positive cases, mostly students.
- Green road property is going on the market with multiple potential buyers, with estimated value of \$3 million.
- Renovation of Dolan is still on the agenda, with an estimated cost of \$14.2 million.

E. Update from Finance ad hoc Committee/Board Finance Committee (Weinstein, Spurgin, Webinger, Shwlsion)

- They are consolidating debt of \$38 million, which is a good move with low interest rate. Of the total, \$15m is committed to Dolan project. The committee showed the revised budget. If we open in spring, deficit this year would be \$3m, with money from the CARES Act and the \$3m draw from endowment factored in. If not, there'll be \$6-7m additional loss.
- Half of the budget is academic-related, half is not academic-related.
- The ad hoc committee met with Lauri for the first time last week. Didn't see evidence to justify draconian cuts. The committee made it known that they want to be involved in actions that will lead up to decision-making.
- Lauri will speak to the faculty in Oct. as required by the Handbook; will be willing to hold 30-min sessions with faculty members on financial issues.

3. Strategic Initiative 4 Update (Emily Butler)

- Steve offered Emily the position with the strategic initiative on 4/3/20. Emily has been much latitude in the job. This position is under the aegis of the Provost's office, not in CAS. Emily is collaborating closely with Bonnie in "using a faculty perspective to intervene in university processes." Currently Emily is talking with faculty, staff, and students from course descriptions and course titles to curricular offerings in the core, majors and minors, and other programming such as experiential learning, service, events hosted on campus, to recruiting and fundraising, to figure out a compelling

narrative of the liberal arts, not just manifest in particular degree offering or in the core, but as fundamental element of the character of the whole institution, and as something with a clear pathway of communication across different divisions of the institution. It's about forging alliance to build and sustain the culture of a liberal arts institution.

5. Proposed Faculty Handbook amendment on relocation of faculty after department/program elimination (Faculty Handbook Committee)

- Jeff: what we want is a process for the relocation. Matt started the initiative. It's an amendment coming from the Faculty Handbook committee, is now in draft phase. This is the first announcement. The committee now welcomes feedback.
- Proposed change: "In these instances, efforts **will** first be made to relocate each affected Faculty member within the University. **Relocation efforts must involve consultations between the affected faculty members, the Provost/AVP, the relevant academic dean(s), and the chairs of relevant departments to identify suitable sites for continued teaching and scholarly contributions that meet the needs of the department and fit the qualifications of the affected Faculty members.**"
- Faculty feedbacks: 1) "Shall" should not be replaced by "will", 2) "meet the needs of the university" instead of "department."
- There will be an open hearing on this amendment within the next 30 days.

6. Faculty motions on response to the Board (Hessinger/Gallo)

- Hessinger and Gallo sent two motions to the faculty: Motion A is a repeal of the "Budgetary Hardship" amendment; Motion B is a repeal of all three recent amendments. The intention is to show the board that the faculty appreciates the financial difficulties and is willing to negotiate, but will not tolerate threat to the tenure under any circumstances.
- Marcus Gallo moved to have a straw poll of the two motions followed by a vote to send the motion that gets the higher approval rate to the board of directors, Dan Kilbride seconded the motion.
- Discussion: should we set the date of withdrawal of the amendment before or after 9/30 when the board will talk with the faculty about the amendment?
- Straw poll:

Send Motion A to the board of directors: 95 voted "yes"; 6 voted "no"

Send Motion B to the board of directors: 19 voted "yes"; 77 voted "no"

- Final Vote:

Send Motion A to the board of directors: 100 voted "yes"; 2 voted "no"

